

Exclusion Policy and Procedure (GWHR80)

This Policy applies to all Groundwork South and North Tyneside, Route2Work learners and staff (hereafter referred to as Groundwork).

The Principal and the Governors believe in the principle of inclusion and supports all measures to allow learners to remain within the College community. Nevertheless there are occasions when the behaviour of an individual and its' impact on other learners and members of staff means that he/she is excluded for a short term or, rarely, on a permanent basis. This document sets out the procedures which the College will adopt and the principles on which they are founded to ensure fairness, consistency, openness and legality in the process.

The Exclusion Policy is considered when all possible actions identified through the Behaviour Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy and/or Positive Behaviour Plan/Positive Communication Plans have been exhausted. It can also be used if the serious nature of the behaviour(s) being addressed require investigation without possible interference or are likely to impact upon the safety of the individual or others in the College.

The Principal or their appointed manager is the only person permitted to permanently exclude a learner. They are required to follow the procedures as set out in the Behaviour Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy and/or Positive Behaviour Plan which are designed to ensure fairness and openness and minimise the need for an appeal against the decision.

All exclusion cases are treated in the strictest confidence. Only those who need to know the details of exclusion are informed of them.

Types of exclusion: Learners can be excluded from the College in two ways:

- 1: Suspension or fixed term exclusion
- 2: Permanent exclusion

Post 16 - Fixed Term Exclusion

Several fixed term exclusions, a five-day exclusion or persistent breaches of the Behaviour Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy and/or Positive Behaviour Plan will result in a Principal's review meeting and a warning of Permanent Exclusion being a possible sanction.

Fixed term exclusion can only be decided by the Principal or their appointed manager and are not intended to correct learner behaviour. This process will only be used when:

- Health and safety is compromised where a learners presence is believed to be a risk to themselves or others
- To allow an investigation to take place following a serious incident where the learners presence may affect the procedure, such as drug related investigation or a fight on College premises
- The learner has put themselves beyond the control of the College by breaking the Behaviour Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy and/or Positive Behaviour Plan and rules for their safety and/or the safety of others
- A police charge brought against a learner of the college, where an investigation could lead to a police caution or further court action.

After a Fixed Term Exclusion there must be a reintegration meeting with a designated staff member, parent/carer and learner. The re-integration meeting will:

- Be used to understand the learner's reflection upon the incident and the exclusion and the attitude of the parents/carer.
- Be used to establish whether the learner is ready to return to College and follow the College's Behaviour Policy Anti-Bullying Policy and/or Positive Behaviour Plan.
- Be used to make the learner aware of the potential consequences of repeating the behaviour that led to the exclusion.
- Be used to develop a Positive Behaviour Plan with the learner if the learner does not already have one.

Post 16 - Permanent Exclusion

A decision to exclude a learner permanently should be taken only:

A. in response to serious breaches of the College's behaviour policy; and B. if allowing the learner to remain in College would seriously harm the education or welfare of the other learners or staff in the College.

C. if, from a Managed Move, the learner due to return to College has failed to demonstrate significant/sustained improvement at the host College or if the criteria for A and B are met.

The College follows the latest DfE guidance regarding exclusions for both fixed term and permanent exclusions to ensure that learners are treated fairly and not discriminated against.

Where it is likely that a permanent exclusion may happen, the Principal will call a meeting with relevant staff and will ensure that all reasonable strategies to address behaviour have been considered and applied. This will include interventions from:

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer
- Programme Lead, tutors and other support team depending on the student needs
- External agencies

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Review Date: September 2022

Before the meeting the learner concerned will be encouraged to:

- write, sign and date a statement of what happened in their own words
- agree to an interview to present their side of what happened in an incident

A Learning Support Officer may act as scribe to record the learner's statement if the learner needs support with literacy skills or is refusing to co-operate.

Witness statements:-

The content of witness statements and their sources will be shared with the learner as they are entitled to know the source and nature of the evidence. However, if the College has a concern for the health and safety or the emotions of a witness, the College may allow the statement to remain anonymous, even if the circumstances lead to a permanent exclusion of the learner.

Proof:-

The meeting will draw upon –

- Evidence of a learner's past behaviour; the risk of a repeat of the unacceptable behaviour and the likelihood to respond positively to the guidance, actions and sanctions available. There is no requirement for the Principal to have hard evidence proof, but sufficient serious suspicion should suffice.
- A log of behaviour incidents and associated sanctions.
- Details of any previous exclusions.
- Previous correspondence between College, parents and other agencies (if involved).
- Staff and any other witness statements regarding the incident/s.
- Reports of any counselling undertaken.
- Details of any support provided to the learner prior to the incident.
- A statement from the Programme Lead/SENCo, if relevant, detailing the learner's needs and the College's adjustments to meet these needs, and any additional reports from other professionals such as Educational Psychologists where available.
- A copy of the College's policies on behaviour.
- A record of the learner's attendance/absence.
- A copy of any external or other reports by other agencies that may be appropriate.
- A report of action taken against other learner/s who may have been involved in the incident/s

The decision to exclude:-

In all cases where a learner is permanently excluded, information and guidance will be provided of possible alternative places of study. Students aged 16 to 19 will be referred to the local careers guidance service.

Parent/Carer Responsibilities:-

If a parent/carer sends an excluded learner, (fixed period or permanent), to the College or refuses to collect them, guidance suggests that the College's duty of care remains, as the College must have responsibility for the learner's safety.

For Post 16 students, the College will ensure they have safe and adequate means to travel to their home. However, if a Post 16 student attends the College against advice with the intention of disrupting College's

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normal working practices or threatening others, staff may decide to seek police help to remove the learner from the premises.